



*Office of*  
**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY  
ATTORNEY**

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** Dylan Reingold, County Attorney

**DATE:** October 13, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Public Hearing and Discussion of 2021 Redistricting of County Commissioner Districts

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**BACKGROUND.**

The United States Census Bureau has completed the 2020 decennial census, and has released the new census information. This has triggered a responsibility of the Board of County Commissioners to review the commissioner districts in light of the census data, and to make changes required by law. Specifically, (1) article VIII, section (1)(e) of the Florida Constitution provides that “after each decennial census the board of county commissioners shall divide the county into districts of contiguous territory as nearly equal in population as practicable,” and (2) section 124.01, Florida Statutes provides that “there shall be five county commissioners’ districts in each county, which shall be numbered one to five, inclusive, and shall be as nearly equal in proportion to population as possible.” Section 124.01 goes on to say that changes in county commissioner districts “shall be made only in odd-numbered years.”

At the July 13, 2021 meeting, the Board held its first discussion of the redistricting process. A schedule was adopted which called for additional public hearings, tentatively scheduled for August 17, October 19, and December 7 (for final adoption). On August 17, 2021, the Board adopted a 2021 Redistricting Plan which set forth criteria to be followed by staff in preparing redistricting proposals, and incorporated the public hearing schedule.

The following criteria were adopted by the Board:

- 1) Districts shall be as nearly equal in population as possible with final population figures not exceeding a deviation of 6% between the largest and the smallest district, and not exceeding a deviation of 3% between any district and the “ideal population” (defined as the total population of the County divided by five).
- 2) Districts shall be compact, rather than sprawling.
- 3) Districts shall be contiguous – that is, no portion of a district shall be geographically separate and apart from the rest of the district.
- 4) Respect for Existing Districts, with current commissioners being maintained in their current districts.
- 5) Neighborhoods and other communities of interest shall be included within a single district, rather than split among two or more districts.
- 6) Districts shall follow major natural or man-made boundaries – e.g., major roads, rivers, bridges, canals, etc.
- 7) Districts shall follow United States Census Bureau blocks.
- 8) No district shall be drawn to split or minimize the political influence of any group of residents.

The County GIS Division, primarily through the efforts of Paige Lester, GIS Analyst, using the criteria set forth in the 2021 Redistricting Plan, has developed three redistricting proposals. Each of the proposals is attached. Copies of the proposed maps have been posted at the Main Library and the North County Library, and on the County’s website and the Supervisor of Elections website. Copies have also been provided to the five municipalities within the County, the School Board and to Senator Debbie Mayfield and Representative Erin Grall. The County Attorney believes that all three proposals meet the requirements of the law and the criteria established by the Board.

### **FUNDING.**

There are no funding requirements.

### **RECOMMENDATION.**

County staff recommends that the Chairman open the public hearing, take public input, and close the public hearing, and that the Board then discuss the proposals and provide initial feedback to staff, so that staff can move forward toward the preparation and submittal of a final proposal for adoption on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **ATTACHMENTS.**

Proposed (# 1, 2 and 3) Redistricting Maps